



## Australia news

# Australia and Japan to share intelligence on China in security deal, ambassador says

In interview with Guardian Australia, Shingo Yamagami also hints Australia is likely to be invited to G7 summit in Hiroshima

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**Daniel Hurst** *Foreign affairs and defence correspondent*

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Japan and Australia will share intelligence assessments about China's military buildup and intentions under a security deal to be signed by the two prime ministers this weekend.

Japan's ambassador, Shingo Yamagami, also hinted that Australia was likely to be invited to the G7 summit in Hiroshima next year, saying its participation would be a "natural" step at a time of worsening tensions in the region.

The Australian prime minister, [Anthony Albanese](#), and his counterpart, Fumio Kishida, are set to sign a new security declaration when they meet in Perth on Saturday, updating a previous deal from 15 years ago.

In an interview with Guardian Australia on Wednesday, Yamagami said the deal would include "steps to strengthen the exchange of strategic assessments" between the two countries.

Yamagami, a former head of the foreign ministry's intelligence and analysis service, said Japan's expertise and insights on China's intentions were "sought after by our Five Eyes partners" including Australia.

"I'm quite sure this visit and this joint declaration to be signed by the two prime ministers will serve as an indispensable catalyst to enhanced intelligence cooperation," he said.

"We all know the security environment has dramatically changed since 2007. If you look at the Chinese military budget, even if you look at the announced official budget, it has more than quadrupled."

Japanese self-defence force pilots had scrambled 722 flights last year in response to Chinese aircraft, or an average of two a day, Yamagami said. He said North Korea had conducted 27 missile tests this year, including [one over Japan earlier this month](#).

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“So if you look at the surrounding situation of Japan, and from Australia’s perspective too, [in] the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, there is no denying that the security environment has become increasingly difficult and challenging,” he said.

“That is why we need to come up with an upgraded self-defence cooperation declaration in order to increase deterrence.”

Russia’s “egregious invasion of Ukraine” was another reason for Japan and Australia to increase their deterrence efforts, he said, to “make sure a similar thing will not take place across the Taiwan Strait”.

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“We are not here to be aggressive or belligerent. We are here just to respond to the deteriorating security environment.”

Yamagami argued Japan and Australia were “in total sync when it comes to our perception of what’s going on in the South China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, [the Senkaku Islands](#) and the entire Indo-Pacific region”.

He said the two countries were pushing for “a free and open Indo-Pacific, not to be dominated by any authoritarian power, not to be coerced, not to be intimidated by any rising power”.

There was likely to be an increase in joint training exercises between Japan and Australia, he said.

He hoped a separate, previously signed agreement to make it [easier for Japanese and Australian troops to train on each other’s territory](#) would be ratified by Japan’s parliament - the Diet - early next year. Australia’s joint standing committee on treaties is also examining that deal.

Yamagami said Japan stood ready to cooperate with the Aukus countries - Australia, the UK and the US - on advanced technologies.

“We keep on hearing from Aukus partners that apart from this joint work on nuclear-propelled submarines, when it comes to other items, such as AI or cyber security or quantum technology, they would like to see cooperation with Japan,” he said.

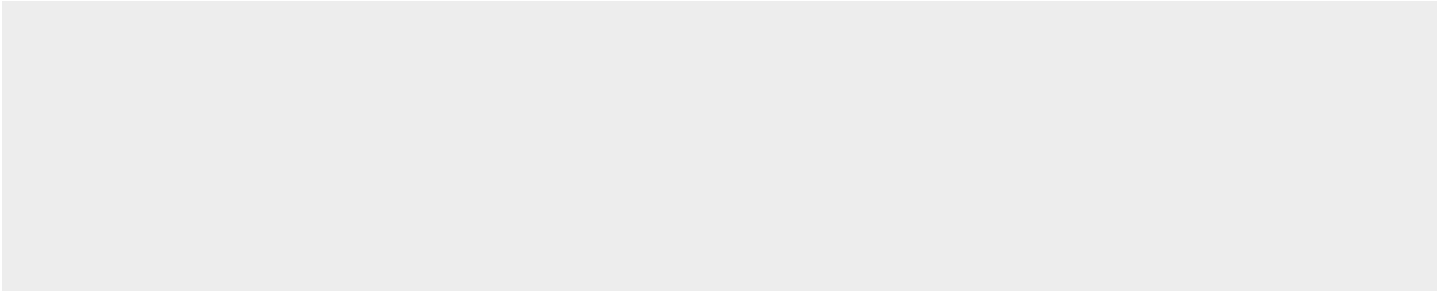
“Japan is willing to extend our cooperation to Aukus partners when required and desired.”

Yamagami said he “wouldn’t be surprised at all” if Japan invited Australia to the G7 in Hiroshima but it would be the prime minister’s call.

“It seems quite natural,” he said.

China’s president, Xi Jinping, said in a major speech earlier this week that he sought peaceful reunification with Taiwan as part of “the rejuvenation of the great Chinese nation” but he would never rule out the use of force.

Xi [told the 20th Communist party congress](#) the Taiwan issue was “China’s own problem to solve” and denounced “foreign interference” for exacerbating tensions.



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